

JACK FIRES

Jack Fires was only 21 when a horse he was riding broke down and rolled over him in a training-hours accident at River Downs in 1975.

“I remember lying there and asking where my legs were,” said Jack. “They felt like they were folded up in my chest like an accordion.”

Despite his devastating spinal-cord injury, Jack has managed to keep a positive attitude. “I took what I was given and went on,” he said.

Jack grew up part of a big family on a farm in Arkansas. Of the 11 children, eight turned to racing-related careers and one, his brother Earlie, was inducted into the Hall of Fame. “We all grew up loving horses, and racetracks were a good outlet for it.”

He credited his mother for instilling in him a positive outlook and competitive spirit.

“I prefer to be outgoing to living in a shell,” he said. “All of us kids grew up with a natural drive to compete and it keeps you going.”